

Idaho Trade Token Newsletter

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News

On Tuesday, September 29, 1998, Mrs. Don MacBride had a lot of material Don had collected over the years sold at auction. I went to the preview one day earlier and decided I couldn't justify standing around a whole day for the few tokens to come up. Besides, they were in a locked display case, face down! I wasn't sure whether that was done as "bait" or whether the person placing them in the display thought the reverses were most significant.

Dan Lute and Rudy Burns did attend, but Dan was the only one to my knowledge to buy any tokens. As near as we can determine, the ones sold were Idaho pieces not in Don's collection (duplicates?) plus some from Oregon.

On another note, knowing that Cliff Mishler, President of Krause Publications (**Numismatic News** and a host of other hobby periodicals), was an avid collector of sticker dollars, I sent him a couple of stickers from our Salmon gathering along with the story behind them. He may join us at a future rendezvous after he retires in 1999 or 2000.

New Plastic Tokens

Dick Magnuson reports that Sweet's Lounge in Wallace is using a new set of plastic tokens. You may recall the aluminum pieces Dick passed around at Salmon from the place: Good For One Drink on Punky & Babe, with the World's Silver Mining Capital reverse. These all have gold lettering on colored plastic, and are 41mm in diameter. #WALL-63(B), GOOD FOR ONE



DRAFT BEER, blue, #WALL-63(C), GOOD FOR ONE CAN OR BOTTLE OF BEER, red, and GOOD FOR ONE DRINK, green. When we are in Wallace next summer for our Third Gathering, we will have to stop in for a set.

Soundex coding

As our nation grew, the number of individual surnames expanded as well. There was a census taken every decade, but it was essentially useless to find a person unless you knew fairly closely where he lived. I say "he" because the early censuses listed only the head of households by name. In the 1930s factors converged to yield the soundex indexing system in use today. At that time the Social Security System was created and it became important for individuals to be able to prove how old they were in order to qualify for a pension. Interestingly enough, census takers never were instructed to ask for proof of age - they merely recorded what was told them. The second factor in developing the Soundex system was the Works Progress Administration, a depression era government agency providing employment to

those without jobs. One of the WPA projects for the National Archives was going through the census sheets, starting with the 1880 enumeration. Workers filled out 3x5 index cards for each family unit on the census. Each card gave the state, county, enumeration district, page, and line number, plus the name found on the sheet.

The National Archives recognized that, during this whole process, spelling errors could appear. An individual spoke the names of all residents to the census taker who wrote in longhand what he or she heard. Years later, the WPA employee read this writing and wrote down on the index card their interpretation of what was written. The solution was the Soundex system which codes together surnames of similar sounds even though the spelling may differ. These index cards were sorted into Soundex order by state and later microfilmed.

A Soundex code begins with the first letter of the surname. Following that are three digits that represent the first three remaining consonants according to the following list:

1 = B, P, F, V

3 = D, T

5 = M, N

2 = C, S, G, J, K, Q, X, Z

4 = L

6 = R

Some of the more subtle rules are that double letters are coded as if they only appear once, the letters A, E, I, O, U, Y, H, and W are not coded, and zeroes are used to fill out the 3-digit code if necessary. Surname prefixes such as van, Von, Di, de, le, D', dela, or du are sometimes disregarded both in alphabetizing and in coding.

Examples: Smith = S530, Smythe = S530, Williams = W452, Ott = O300, Anderson = A536, d'Amant = A553, Dye = D000, Dyer = D600

"What's the point?" you ask. First, if you ever research tokens using the census, you will need to find your way around using Soundex codes. One possible exception to this is the 1910 Idaho census which volunteers at the Ricks College Family History Center input to a computerized database. I say possible because transcription errors still creep in and it is helpful to know which other spellings to check when you don't find the results you want.

Another thing to keep in mind with tokens is that spelling errors crept in on them as well. There is no real reason to throw out a maverick attribution or research item because the spelling is off. The tokens of W. O. Mock of Fenn, Idaho provided a classic example of this. The



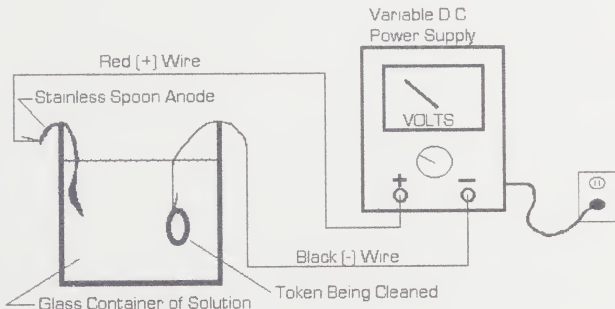
piece pictured on the left is #FEN-2(a), and like #FEN-2, got the spelling of both the town and the merchant correctly. There is a maverick, #FEN-2(b) which says W. O. MACK, and lastly are #FEN-2(d) and #FEN-2(e) as pictured on the right which say W. O. Mock / Fern, Idaho. No, Fern is not a new Idaho town! Incidentally, I just discovered that my photo scanner will not scan the old 127-type negatives (#FEN-2(b)) as used with my original coin camera.

ELECTROCLEANING by Dan Lute

As a continuation of last month's article I will now explain how to set up the EC apparatus.

The cleaning solution consists of a solution of salt and water in the ratio of one tablespoon salt to two cups of hot water. Mix enough to fill your beaker about 2/3 full. This electrolyte solution allows the current to flow from negative to positive since we are using direct current (DC). When the item to be cleaned is attached to the negative side it allows electrons to flow from it to the positive side, thus serving the purpose of removing the corrosion.

Next take the old stainless spoon and bend the handle into a U shape so it can hang over the edge of the beaker. Attach one of the alligator clips to one end of the red[+] positive wire and attach the clip to the handle of the spoon and hang the spoon on the edge of the beaker as shown in the sketch. The clip should not be in the solution. The spoon or positive side is called the anode. Over time the spoon will deteriorate and will need to be replaced.



Attach the other alligator clip to one end of the black [negative] wire, and attach the token or other item to be cleaned to the clip, this side is referred to as the cathode. It is best to just attach the clip to the edge of the token since it seems to result in more uniform cleaning. Bend the black wire so it can be hooked over the edge of the beaker on the opposite side from the anode. Make sure there is sufficient distance between the anode and cathode so they never touch while in the cleaning process, as this could damage the power supply or blow a fuse. Make sure the items are properly adjusted each time before turning on the power supply. Now attach the red [+] and black [-] wires to the respectively marked terminals on the power supply. Refer to the sketch. Also make sure to use the cleaner in a well-ventilated area.

You are now ready to turn on the power supply and watch the cleaner at work. If everything is hooked up properly you will notice small bubbles rising from the surface of the token. If the item is real dirty, dark brown foam will form on the top of the solution - it can be skimmed off as needed to help keep the solution clear. After about two minutes turn the power off and remove the token and rinse it off in clean water and inspect it. Try rubbing it with a little wet baking soda paste between your fingers or use a toothbrush. This helps remove some of the

scale and speeds the process. If necessary return it to the solution for another two or three minutes depending on the results of the first run. You may find that ten or fifteen minutes are needed to clean the token to your satisfaction but take it slowly at first so you don't remove too much material. On stubborn stains and corrosion you may use a soft suede brass brush in between processes.

Remember to keep your solution reasonably clean; mix a new batch often. Also, take note not to use the same solution on two different types of metals. The reason for this is that if you accidentally reverse the polarity and the item to be cleaned becomes the cathode you will end up plating the material in the solution onto the item you think you are cleaning.

If the item you cleaned looks too bright and shiny you can use the reverse polarity trick to replating a little material back onto the token, which in effect tends to darken the item a little. Here again try this for very short intervals at a time. Reverse electrolysis used in this manner is called toning.

Have fun experimenting with this process and remember to always turn the power off before making changes with the anode or cathode. Electricity and water need serious respect.

The information in this article was taken from an article by Mark McCurry in Western and Eastern Treasures magazine and from my personal experience in working with the electrocleaning process.

Trouble Right Here in River City

"With a capital T and that rhymes with P and that stands for pool." Keeping youngsters away from the social evils has always been a worry for adults. The Burley Herald of January 7, 1926 reported the first in a series of articles from the Burley city council:

REQUEST MADE TO CLOSE TWO POOL ROOMS IN BURLEY

The City Council met Monday evening with the mayor and two members absent. The usual routine business was disposed of after which a petition was presented by John T. Morris, Robert H. Coker and O. L. Kendall. The petition called for the closing of Murphey's pool hall and the Corner pool hall, mentioning the Workingmen's club. In the petition it was also mentioned that the Star Recreation pool hall was a hangout for boys under age.

The petitioners cited instances where the law has been violated and is being violated every day when boys are allowed to play pool who are under 21 years of age. The petition was read and laid on the table. The mayor and two aldermen were absent. Nothing definite can be said at this time as to what the council will do in the matter.

The petition waited for the next meeting of the council. The Burley Herald of January 21, 1926 reported

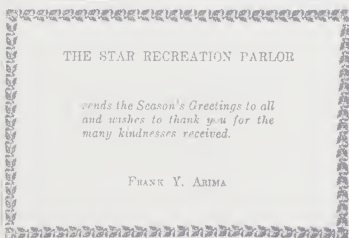
CITY COUNCIL DENIES PETITION TO CLOSE POOL HALLS

The city council met in regular session with all members present except Alderman James. After routine business the petition asking the closing of two pool halls was taken up. Rev. John T. Morris and D. R. Langlois were the supporters of the petition, with Rev. Kendall and Coker absent. Mr. Morris was the main speaker; Mr.

Langlois making only a short talk. The opposers of the petition were Messrs. Latham and Sprague, Frank Arimo of the Star Recreation Parlor and Chester Maughan of Murphey's pool hall. City Attorney Howells in his official capacity, was also present. Messrs. Morris and Langlois were more in favor of seeing the law enforced than closing the pool rooms. The state law says that minors cannot frequent pool halls, even with the consent of parents. The pool hall owners contended they can't keep the boys out of their places of business. The boys watch their chance and slip in and start a game, the owners say. After discussing the question from every angle the council took the matter up under unfinished business.

The council appreciated the fact that the matter of non-enforcement was brought to their attention, they denied the petition, and instructed the proper officers to see that the law was enforced.

City Attorney Howells told the council that the petition was faulty in that it was not representative in its scope and that it would be unwise to grant the request.



The Corner Pool Hall, later known as "Sprague's Sport Shop" was at 501 N. Overland Avenue on the northeast corner of Main and Overland in Burley. I recall when I was in high school, Sprague's



sponsored some sort of trivia quiz on KBAR radio. I once won a nice pocket hand warmer that I put to good use while duck hunting.

Alfred O. "Snowball" Latham and Benjamin F. Sprague ran the Corner Pool Hall from about 1924 to 1928 when Latham moved to Twin Falls to open his Sportshops there. Sprague continued on



into the 1960s, moving more into the sporting goods business as time went on. There are two brass token varieties known from this business. #BU-12(a) as shown and its "25" mate, the [b]

variety. They are both products of the Salt Lake Stamp Company. Schell listed a Good For 5¢ In Trade reverse with the obverse shown, but I believe that to be in error in the listing as I have never seen such a reverse. The 5 token is fairly common, I know of at least 8, but I know of only one of the 25 one.

The Star Recreation or Star Pool hall was located at 116 West Main Street in 1936. In 1925 the proprietor was Frank Y. Arima, but Dick Menchaca was listed as owner in 1936. There are two known token varieties from the Star Recreation, a 5¢ and the 25¢ one illustrated here. Both are aluminum, but the rarity situation is opposite that of the Sprague's tokens. I know of only one 5¢ piece, but at least 12 of the 25¢ one. There is also a STAR CLUB / BURLEY, IDAHO. // GOOD FOR 12½¢ / IN TRADE token, but I don't know whether it is from the same business.

Research Needed

I have had this maverick for a number of years, hoping to be able to prove it is from Idaho Falls. The non-mavericks from Brunt's Cash Grocery carry the slogan "The store that saves you money" and are aluminum, octagonal pieces. One each of the 5¢ and 10¢ denominations are known. George Brunt was the proprietor from about 1903 to 1919 when Arthur C. Pearson took over the concern. It was at 361 and 363 A Street.



The maverick could well have been issued by this business as it is of a style used by many such general stores, plus the 1912 date is right. What is needed is an advertisement for this business where the slogan "Where the \$ does its duty" is used. Have any of you seen one?

Best regards,

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